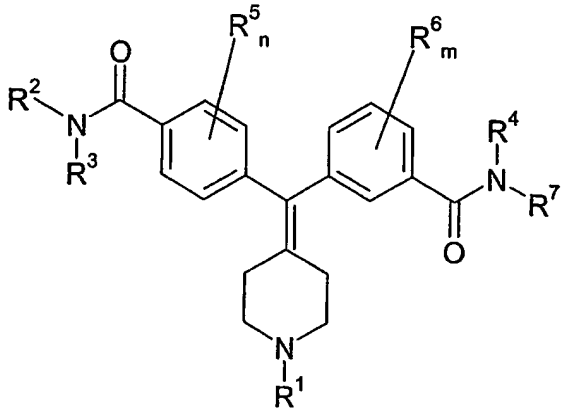
What is claimed is :

1. A compound of formula I, a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, diasteromers, enantiomers, or mixtures thereof:



I

wherein

R^1 is hydrogen, C_{1-6}alkyl-O-C(=O)-, C_{1-6}alkyl, substituted C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, and substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, optionally substituted aryl, optionally substituted heteroaryl, optionally substituted arylalkyl or optionally substituted heteroarylalkyl;

n is 0, 1 or 2; m is 0, 1, or 2;

R^2, R^3 and R^4 are, independently, selected from hydrogen, C_{1-6}alkyl, substituted C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, and substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkyl;

R^5 and R^6 are, independently, selected from -R, $-NO_2$, -OR, -Cl, -Br, -I, -F, $-CF_3$, -C(=O)R, -C(=O)OH, $-NH_2$, -SH, -NHR, $-NR_2$, -SR, $-SO_3H$, $-SO_2R$, -S(=O)R, -CN, -OH, -C(=O)OR, $-C(=O)NR_2$, -NRC(=O)R, and -NRC(=O)-OR, wherein R is, independently, a hydrogen or C_{1-6}alkyl; and

R^7 is selected from C_{1-6}alkyl, substituted C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, and substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, optionally substituted C_{6-10}aryl, optionally substituted C_{3-9}heteroaryl, optionally substituted C_{6-10}aryl-C_{1-6}alkyl, and optionally substituted C_{3-9}heteroaryl-C_{1-6}alkyl; or R^4 and R^7 together with nitrogen connected thereto form a portion of a C_{3-6}heterocycle ring.

2. A compound according to claim 1,

wherein R^1 is hydrogen, C_{1-6}alkyl-O-C(=O)-, C_{1-6}alkyl, substituted C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, and substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkyl;

R^2 and R^3 are, independently, C_{1-3}alkyl or halogenated C_{1-3}alkyl;

R^4 is hydrogen;

R^7 is selected from optionally substituted C_{6-10}aryl, optionally substituted C_{3-9}heteroaryl, optionally substituted C_{6-10}aryl-C_{1-6}alkyl, and optionally substituted C_{3-9}heteroaryl-C_{1-6}alkyl; and

n and m are 0.

3. A compound according to claim 1,

wherein R^1 is selected from hydrogen, C_{1-6}alkyl-O-C(=O)-;

R^2 and R^3 are ethyl;

R^4 is hydrogen;

R^7 is C_{6-10}aryl or C_{6-10}arylC_{1-3}alkyl; and

n and m are 0.

4. A compound according to claim 1, wherein

R^1 is hydrogen;

R^2 and R^3 are ethyl;

R^4 is hydrogen;

R^7 is phenyl, benzyl or phenethyl; and

n and m are 0.

5. A compound selected from:

4-[[3-(anilinocarbonyl)phenyl](piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-*N,N*-diethylbenzamide;

4-[{3-[(benzylamino)carbonyl]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-*N,N*-diethylbenzamide;

4-[(3-{[(2-phenethyl)amino]carbonyl}phenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-*N,N*-diethylbenzamide;

and pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof.

6. A compound according to any one of claims 1-5 for use as a medicament.

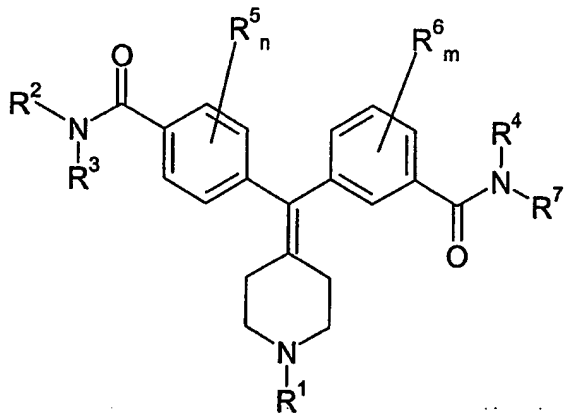
7. The use of a compound according to any one of claims 1-5 in the manufacture of a medicament for the therapy of pain, anxiety or functional gastrointestinal disorders.

8. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a compound according to any one of claims 1-5 and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

9. A method for the therapy of pain in a warm-blooded animal, comprising the step of administering to said animal in need of such therapy a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to any one of claims 1-5.

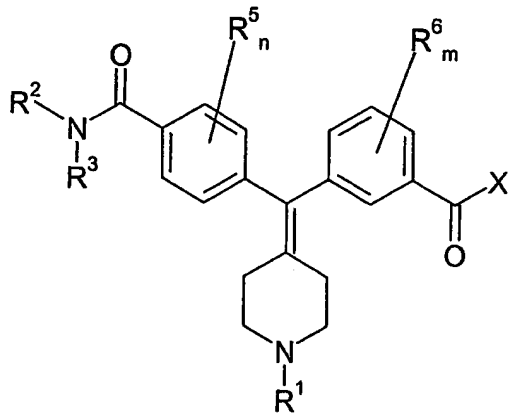
10. A method for the therapy of functional gastrointestinal disorders in a warm-blooded animal, comprising the step of administering to said animal in need of such therapy a therapeutically effective amount of a compound according to any one of claims 1-5.

11. A process for preparing a compound of formula I, comprising:



I

reacting a compound of formula II with HNR^4R^7:



II

wherein

R^1 is hydrogen, C_{1-6}alkyl-O-C(=O)-, C_{1-6}alkyl, substituted C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, and substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, optionally substituted aryl, optionally substituted heteroaryl, optionally substituted arylalkyl or optionally substituted heteroarylalkyl;

n is 0, 1 or 2; m is 0, 1, or 2;

X is selected from –OH, $-OR^8$, $-O-C(=O)-R^8$, -Cl, -Br and -I, wherein R^8 is C_{1-6}alkyl;

R^2, R^3 and R^4 are, independently, selected from hydrogen, C_{1-6}alkyl, substituted C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, and substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkyl;

R^5 and R^6 are, independently, selected from -R, $–NO_2$, -OR, -Cl, -Br, -I, -F, $-CF_3$, -C(=O)R, -C(=O)OH, $-NH_2$, -SH, -NHR, $-NR_2$, -SR, $-SO_3H$, $-SO_2R$, -S(=O)R, -CN, -OH, -C(=O)OR, $-C(=O)NR_2$, -NRC(=O)R, and -NRC(=O)-OR, wherein R is, independently, a hydrogen or C_{1-6}alkyl; and

R^7 is C_{1-6}alkyl, substituted C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, and substituted C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, optionally substituted C_{6-10}aryl, optionally substituted C_{3-9}heteroaryl, optionally substituted C_{6-10}aryl-C_{1-6}alkyl, and optionally substituted C_{3-9}heteroaryl-C_{1-6}alkyl; or R^4 and R^7 together with nitrogen connected thereto form a portion of a C_{3-6}heterocycle ring.

12. A process as claimed in claim 11,

wherein X is –OH;

R^1 is C_{1-6}alkyl-O-C(=O)-;

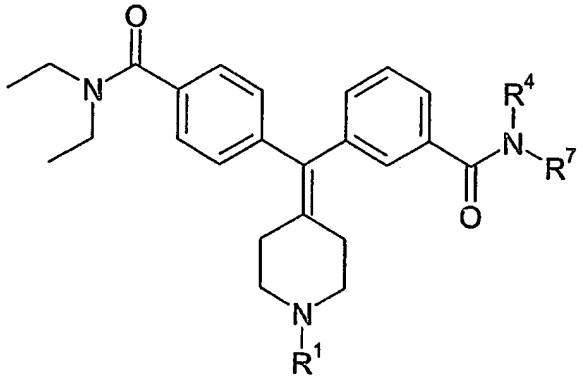
R^2 and R^3 are ethyl;

R^4 is hydrogen or methyl;

R^7 is phenyl, benzyl, phenethyl, cyclopentyl, cyclohexyl, cyclohexylmethyl, 2-chlorobenzyl, 2-fluorobenzyl, 1-(4-methylphenyl)ethyl, 4-methyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl, 2,6-dimethylpyridin-3-yl, isobutyl, or 1-ethylpropyl; or R^4 and R^7 together form 1,5-pentylene or 1,4-butylene; and

n and m are 0.

13. A compound of formula IA, a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, diastereomers thereof, enantiomers thereof, or mixtures thereof:



IA

wherein

R^1 is selected from hydrogen, and C_{1-6}alkyl-O-C(=O)-;

R^4 is selected from hydrogen, C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{2-6}alkenyl, C_{2-6}alkynyl, and C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, wherein said C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{2-6}alkenyl, C_{2-6}alkynyl, and C_{3-6}cycloalkyl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from -R, $-NO_2$, -OR, -Cl, -Br, -I, -F, $-CF_3$, -C(=O)R, -C(=O)OH, $-NH_2$, -SH, -NHR, $-NR_2$, -SR, $-SO_3H$, $-SO_2R$, -S(=O)R, -CN, -OH, -C(=O)OR, $-C(=O)NR_2$, -NRC(=O)R, and -NRC(=O)-OR, wherein R is, independently, a hydrogen or C_{1-6}alkyl;

R^7 is selected from C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{2-6}alkenyl, C_{2-6}alkynyl, C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, C_{3-6}cycloalkyl-C_{1-3}alkyl, C_{6-10}aryl, C_{6-10}aryl-C_{1-3}alkyl, C_{3-6}heteroaryl, and C_{3-6}heteroaryl-C_{1-3}alkyl, wherein said C_{1-6}alkyl, C_{2-6}alkenyl, C_{2-6}alkynyl, C_{3-6}cycloalkyl,

C_{3-6}cycloalkyl-C_{1-3}alkyl, C_{6-10}aryl, C_{6-10}aryl-C_{1-3}alkyl, C_{3-6}heteroaryl, and C_{3-6}heteroaryl-C_{1-3}alkyl are optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from -R, $-NO_2$, -OR, -Cl, -Br, -I, -F, $-CF_3$, -C(=O)R, -C(=O)OH, $-NH_2$, -SH, -NHR, $-NR_2$, -SR, $-SO_3H$, $-SO_2R$, -S(=O)R, -CN, -OH, -C(=O)OR, $-C(=O)NR_2$, -NRC(=O)R, and -NRC(=O)-OR, wherein R is, independently, a hydrogen or C_{1-6}alkyl; or R^4 and R^7 together with nitrogen connected thereto form a portion of a C_{3-6}heterocycle ring.

14. A compound according to claim 13, wherein R^1 is hydrogen;

R^4 is selected from hydrogen and C_{1-6}alkyl; and

R^7 is selected from C_{3-6}alkyl, C_{3-6}cycloalkyl, C_{3-6}cycloalkyl-C_{1-3}alkyl, phenyl, phenyl-C_{1-3}alkyl, and C_{3-6}heteroaryl, wherein said R^7 is further optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from C_{1-6}alkyl, halogenated C_{1-6}alkyl, $-NO_2$, $-CF_3$, C_{1-6}alkoxy, chloro, fluoro, bromo, and iodo.

15. A compound according to claim 13, wherein R^1 is hydrogen;

R^4 is selected from hydrogen and methyl; and

R^7 is selected from C_{4-6}alkyl, phenyl, benzyl, 2-phenylethyl, 1-phenylethyl, cyclopentyl, thiazolyl, pyridinyl and cyclohexyl, wherein R^7 is further optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from methyl, methoxy, chloro, and fluoro.

16. A compound according to claim 13, wherein R^1 is hydrogen; and

R^4 and R^7 are directly linked to form a divalent C_{3-6}alkylene, wherein said C_{3-6}alkylene is optionally substituted with one or more groups selected from methyl, methoxy, chloro, and fluoro.

17. A compound according to claim 13, wherein R^1 is hydrogen; and

R^4 and R^7 are directly linked to form 1,5-pentylene or 1,4-butylene.

18. A compound selected from:

COMPOUND 1: 4-[[3-(anilinocarbonyl)phenyl](piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-*N,N*-diethylbenzamide;

COMPOUND 2: 4-[{3-[(benzylamino)carbonyl]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-*N,N*-diethylbenzamide;

COMPOUND 3: 4-[(3-{[(2-phenylethyl)amino]carbonyl}phenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-*N,N*-diethylbenzamide;

COMPOUND 4: 4-[{3-[(cyclopentylamino)carbonyl]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide;

COMPOUND 5: 4-[{3-[(cyclohexylamino)carbonyl]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]benzoic acid;

COMPOUND 6: 4-[[3-(cyclohexylacetyl)phenyl](piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide;

COMPOUND 7: 4-[(3-{[(2-chlorobenzyl)amino]carbonyl}phenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide;

COMPOUND 8: 4-[(3-{[(2-fluorobenzyl)amino]carbonyl}phenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide;

COMPOUND 9: 4-[[3-({[(1R)-1-(4-methylphenyl)ethyl]amino}carbonyl)phenyl](piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide;

COMPOUND 10: 4-[(3-{[(4-methyl-1,3-thiazol-2-yl)amino]carbonyl}phenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide;

COMPOUND 11: 4-[(3-{[(2,6-dimethylpyridin-3-yl)amino]carbonyl}phenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)-N,N-diethylbenzamide;

COMPOUND 12: 4-[{3-[(isobutylamino)carbonyl]phenyl}(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide;

COMPOUND 13: 4-[(3-{[(1-ethylpropyl)amino]carbonyl}phenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide;

COMPOUND 14: 4-[(3-{[methyl(2-phenylethyl)amino]carbonyl}phenyl)(piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]-N,N-diethylbenzamide;

COMPOUND 15: N,N-diethyl-4-[[3-(piperidin-1-ylcarbonyl)phenyl](piperidin-4-ylidene)methyl]benzamide;

COMPOUND 16: N,N-diethyl-4-{piperidin-4-ylidene[3-(pyrrolidin-1-ylcarbonyl)phenyl]methyl}benzamide;

and pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof.

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